



**Committee: Ways & Means**

**Testimony on: HB531 - Maryland Assn of Environmental Outdoor Education Grant - Funding & Evaluation - Extension**

**Organization: Climate Justice Wing of the Maryland Legislative Coalition**

**Submitting: Diana Younts, Co-Chair**

**Position: Favorable**

**Hearing Date: February 17, 2022**

Dear M. Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB531. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB531.

HB531 increases the mandated fiscal 2026 - 2028 appropriations for the Maryland Association of Environmental and Outdoor Education to increase the number of green schools in the State being able to take advantage of environmentally focused activities.

This program provides PreK to 12th-grade students with educational opportunities that empower them to make changes to reduce environmental impact, practice environmental stewardship, encourage sustainability, increase awareness of how our relationship with the environment ultimately impacts public health and society and fosters environmental literacy.

There are currently 664 Maryland Green Schools. This is 33% of approximately 2,200 public and independent schools; and there are approximately 430,000 PreK to 12th-grade students attending these schools. Green School communities represent a significant opportunity to maintain and improve environmental sustainability. The program is great for our kids and this bill will expand that opportunity for more.

We therefore request a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

**MLC Climate Justice Wing:**

Assateague Coastal Trust

Maryland Legislative Coalition

MD Campaign for Environmental Human Rights

Chesapeake Climate Action Network

WISE

Frack Free Frostburg

Mountain Maryland Movement

Clean Water Action

Howard County Indivisible

Howard County Sierra Club  
Columbia Association Climate Change and  
Sustainability Advisory Committee  
HoCo Climate Action  
CHEER  
Climate XChange - Maryland  
Mid-Atlantic Field Representative/  
National Parks Conservation Association  
350 Montgomery County  
Glen Echo Heights Mobilization  
The Climate Mobilization Montgomery  
County  
Montgomery County Faith Alliance for  
Climate Solutions  
Montgomery Countryside Alliance  
Takoma Park Mobilization Environment  
Committee  
Audubon Naturalist Society  
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church  
Environmental Justice Ministry  
Coalition For Smarter Growth  
DoTheMostGood Montgomery County  
MCPS Clean Energy Campaign  
MoCo DCC  
Potomac Conservancy  
Casa de Maryland  
Nuclear Information & Resource Service  
Clean Air Prince Georges  
Laurel Resist  
Greenbelt Climate Action Network  
Maryland League of Conservation Voters  
Unitarian Universalist Legislative  
Ministry of Maryland  
Concerned Citizens Against Industrial CAFOs  
Wicomico NAACP  
Chesapeake Physicians for Social  
Responsibility  
Chispa MD  
Climate Law & Policy Project

Maryland Poor People's Campaign  
Labor Network for Sustainability  
The Nature Conservancy  
Clean Air Prince Georges  
350 Baltimore  
Maryland Environmental Health Network  
Climate Stewards of Greater Annapolis  
Talbot Rising  
Adat Shalom Climate Action  
Chesapeake Earth Holders  
Climate Parents of Prince Georges  
Echotopia  
Maryland NAACP State Conference,  
Environmental Justice Committee